

**SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MANAGING INFORMATION FOR A PLURALITY OF COMPUTER SYSTEMS IN A DISTRIBUTED NETWORK****ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5       A system for managing computers in a distributed computer network includes a collection agent for each computer being monitored, a local database coupled to each collection agent, one or more condensing agents coupled to the databases, and at least one console module. The condensing agent generates an index table from a source database and sends it upstream to the next level up in the hierarchy of  
10 databases. Other condensing agents may in turn act on this index table and send it up to a still further level, until a top-level master node has an index table reflecting the entire network. The console can use the index table to identify what databases contain needed data, and then make only selective connections to databases to answer queries, avoiding connections to all the local databases. The condensing agent also  
15 produces summarized data and sends it upstream as well, to be used by the console. Efficiency is improved over conventional systems. Use of the index method and the summary method can be transparent to (hid from) the user of the console, or may be made visible, with selection options.

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